

OSMP's Natural Selections - Free Public Nature Hikes

Last Updated Monday, 26 March 2007

Natural Selections

Nature Hikes and Programs

Natural Selections is our ongoing series of educational programs on topics including ecology, wildlife, local history, night hikes, children's programs, plus many more. All programs are free and open to the public. Please do not bring dogs.

Do you want Natural Selections sent to you by e-mail? Join our mailing list! Follow this link to subscribe. In the drop-down menu, choose "Natural Selections." You will automatically receive notice whenever a new nature hike schedule comes out.

Teachers, scout troops and community groups can obtain free individual programs from Open Space and Mountain Parks naturalists. Follow this link to learn more.

Download the Natural Selections Winter 2007 Schedule

April

Birdwatching for Beginners

Sat April 7 2:30-4:30 pm

Many would-be birders are intimidated by identical little birds with similar names. Can't tell a Yellow-breasted Noddle from a White-winged Towhee? Then join Naturalist Dave Sutherland for a fun introduction to birds. Meet at Sawhill Ponds (click for map), approximately ½ mile north of Valmont Road on 75th Street. Bring binoculars and bird guides if you have them.

For a Change of Pace, Explore Your Open Space!

Wed April 11 5:30-7 pm

Wed April 25 5:30-7 pm

Leave your hectic work day behind as you ease into the evening with a slow-paced, uplifting hike in our nearby foothills. From Flatirons to falcons to forests, naturalist Suzanne Michot will introduce you to the wildlife, plants, geology, and history of Boulder's treasured trails. Meet at the Chautauqua Ranger Cottage (click for map). Approx. 2 miles, 400 ft. climb.

Migratory Raptors on the Hogback Ridge Trail

Sat April 14 9 am-1 pm

Join Ranger Rick Hatfield for a hike along the Hogback Ridge Trail to look for migrating raptors as they make their annual journey from their winter homes to summer nesting areas. We'll cover individual natural histories and improving your identification skills. Please bring binoculars and dress for the weather. The Hogback Ridge Trail is steep but we'll go slow and stop along the way when we see migrating raptors. Meet at the Foothills Trailhead ([click for map](#)). 2.8 miles, 840 feet elevation gain.

Predators and Prey

Sun April 15 2-3:30 pm

Animals spend most of their time looking for food, or trying not to become another's meal. What might it feel like to be a hungry wild animal? Join Naturalist Dave Sutherland for an afternoon of games that let you pretend YOU'RE the predator . . . or the prey. Meet at Sawhill Ponds ([click for map](#)), ½ mile north of Valmont Road on 75th Street. Ages 6 and up.

Senses Galore!

Sat April 21 8:30-9:45 pm

The Lyrid meteor shower produces about 20 meteors per hour, and peaks this year on April 22. Join Ranger Dave Gustafson to learn about meteors, comets, constellations, and archaeoastronomy. We'll hike 1/4 mile, then sit to view the night sky and test our senses. Dave's glow-in-the-dark star posters make learning easy! Realization Point ([Click for map](#), 3.5 miles up Flagstaff Rd). Look for the Ranger truck. We'll leave promptly at 8:30.

Pilates Nature Hike

Sun April 22 9–11:30 am

Observing the movement of animals influenced Joseph Pilates's development of the Pilates method. He emphasized walking outdoors in the sunshine and breathing fresh air. Pilates instructor Christine Guzy will start the morning with mat exercises, then transfer your new body awareness into healthy hiking habits. Bring a mat, hiking poles if you use them, and your pack. Space limited to 12 participants, call 303 441 3440 for reservations.

Writing about Nature

Sun April 22 9:30 am–3:30 pm

Join professional nature writer John A. Murray for an inspiring outdoor workshop exploring your relationship to Open Space and Mountain Parks through writing. He will explore topics such as openings, closings, word pictures, figurative language, story-telling and publishing. Writers of all abilities welcome, ages 12 & up. Call 720-564-2083 for a reservation.

Birdwatching for Kids

Sun April 29 2-3 pm

Join Ranger Melissa Repjar to identify those migratory birds that are ready to come back and enjoy Colorado's warmth. We'll look for common birds you can find around Boulder, and see what kind of homes they live in and how they survived the long winter. Meet at Sawhill Ponds ([click for map](#)), ½ mile north of Valmont Road on 75th Street. Ages 5 and up.

May

Little Town on the Prairie

Sat May 5 8:30-10:30 am

Learn some eye-poppin' stuff about Boulder's favorite rodent, the Black-tailed Prairie Dog on this hike with Naturalist Dave Sutherland. We'll visit a prairie dog town and spy on their intimate family lives. Meet at Marshall Mesa Trailhead ([click for map](#)).

Explore South Boulder Creek

Sat May 5 8:30-11 am

Fishermen, hikers, and naturalists of all ages come and explore South Boulder Creek and its riparian corridor with Harry Leland (Aquatic Ecologist) and Terry Stuart (Volunteer Naturalist). Get your hands wet sampling the aquatic fauna, and learn more about habitat features and biological communities of this diverse ecosystem on a leisurely hike along the riparian corridor. Meet at the South Mesa Trailhead ([click for map](#)).

Hoops and the Circle of Life Hike

Sun May 6 10 am-12 pm

Seasons come year after year, day cycles into night and the earth rotates around the sun. Come (hoola) hoop to the rhythms of earth, fire, water and air while focusing on our breath and alignment. Naturalist & Pilates teacher Christine Guzy and professional Hoops instructor Betty Hoops will lead this moderate hike for adults and children 12 and up. No hooping experience necessary! Hoops provided. Meet at the Chautauqua Ranger Cottage ([click for map](#)).

Wagons Ho!(Mountain bike tour)

Sat May 12 8-11:30 am

Ranger/Wagon Master Dave Gustafson will lead this bike tour about the history of the short grass prairie. We'll ride 6 miles on single track and crusher fine trails. This is a moderately strenuous tour. A mountain bike, water and helmet are required. No pets please. Meet at Lefthand Trailhead (go 4 mi north of Boulder on Hwy 36 to Neva Rd, then east 1/2 mile to the trailhead).

Prairie Jewels

Sat May 12 9 am-12 pm

Every spring, the prairie blooms - a glorious spectacle we miss as we zoom by in our cars. Join Naturalist Dave Sutherland to seek the tiny treasures nestled in our native grasslands, and learn the lore of the prairie. We'll visit a very special and delicate grassland preserve, so the hike is limited to 15 participants. Call 303-441-3440 for location and reservation.

Celebrating Wildflowers!

Tue May 15 5:30-7:30 pm

Join botanist Megan Bowes for an easy, slow-paced hike to identify and learn about wildflowers blooming in May. We will look for Wild Geranium, Harebells, Penstemon and others. Meet at South Mesa Trailhead ([click for map](#)). Bring a magnifying glass and wildflower book if you have them.

Behind the Flatirons: A Photographic Slide Show

Fri May 18 7– 9 pm

After living in Boulder for more than 30 years, Boulder photographer Christopher Brown finally explored his own back yard. He will take you on a photographic and philosophical tour of the amazing landscapes within Boulder's city limits, and share some of his favorite photographic techniques, philosophies and attitudes gathered through 40 years (and about as many pairs of boots). Meet at Chautauqua Community House, 900 Baseline Road. Follow this link to see a gallery of Chris Brown's photos!

Photography in Our Backyard

Sat May 19 9 am-3 pm

Wake up to Boulder's incredible landscape through photography! Spend a day with Boulder's own Christopher Brown, renowned landscape photographer, who will present an abbreviated one-day version of his 6-week "First Sight" workshop. Explore philosophy, aesthetics, technique and personal relationship with the land in pursuit of the perfect photograph. Ages 12 & up, instruction geared towards those who know how to use their camera. Please try to attend Chris's talk "Behind the Flatirons" on 5/18. Call 720-564-2083 for reservations. Follow this link to see a gallery of Chris Brown's photos!

How Do They Do That?!

Sat May 19 9- 11:30 am

This lovely late spring hike will focus on truly amazing examples of plant and animal survival adaptations that evolved in response to environmental challenges. Join Naturalists Dick Jones and Lynne Sullivan on a tour of these marvels of evolution. Moderate, 1.5 – 2.5 mile hike, for adults. Meet at the Chautauqua Ranger Cottage (click for map).

Animal Babies

Sun May 20 2-3 pm

Join Ranger Melissa Repjar to learn how animal babies welcome their first spring! Come ready to spy all different types of baby animals from the big to the small, with fur or feathers! Meet at Sawhill Ponds (click for map), ½ mile north of Valmont Road on 75th Street. Ages 5 and up.

Gardening with Native Flowers

Sat May 26 1-3 pm

Natives are gorgeous additions to any garden. They need virtually no water or care, and support our local ecology. Naturalist and gardener Dave Sutherland will share information and growing tips so you can enjoy Boulder's wildflowers in your own yard. Meet at Chautauqua Ranger Cottage (click for map).

Open Space & Mountain Parks 101

Wed May 30 5:30–7:30 pm

This land is your land! Hike the McLintock trail with naturalist Jennelle Freeston for an introduction to the area's

biology, geology, and the history of Open Space and Mountain Parks. Meet at Chautauqua Ranger Cottage (click for map) for this moderately strenuous hike.

Bobolink Trailhead Chautauqua Ranger Cottage Cherryvale OSMP administration building Cottonwood Trailhead Crown Rock Doudy Draw Trailhead Eagle Trailhead Enchanted Mesa - McClintock Flagstaff Summit Flatirons Vista Trailhead Foothills Trailhead Foothills Nature Center Greenbelt Plateau Gregory Canyon Left Hand Trailhead Marshall Mesa Trailhead NCAR N. Teller Farms Trailhead Realization Point Sanitas Trailhead Sage Trail (Boulder Valley Ranch) Settlers Park/Red Rocks Sawhill Ponds Sombrero Marsh South Boulder Creek West South Mesa Trailhead Teller Farms Wonderland Lake